

HE'S HEAP BIG INDIAN.

Strange Life History of Quanah Parker.

A POWER AMONG THE COMANCHES.

He is the Son of a White Woman Who Was Captured by the Indians and Compelled to Marry a Chief—A Half Breed of Great Ability.

The story of Quanah Parker and his Comanches, of their long struggle with the whites, their pacification, settlement on Red river and subsequent development, is as interesting as any episode in Indian history. The intrigues among the aspirants for power, the interference of United States officers and the final complete ascendancy of the most talented is but the old story of Greek and Trojan princes, highland clans and French feudatories over again. Human nature worked the same, but

Vain was the chief's, the warrior's pride; They had no Homer, and they died.

General MacKenzie did the reconstruction act thoroughly for the tribe. After the Comanches had left their reservation in the Indian Territory and had been rounded up on the Texas plains two or three times at considerable expense and trouble and some bloodshed, MacKenzie drove the chiefs, and by a decree of his own put Quanah Parker at the head of the Comanche nation. At the same time he made the change effective by driving all of the surplus ponies of the nation—about 8,000 of them—into a defile of the Palo Duro canyon and slaughtering them. This last act was a blow worse than tearing up the railroads in a hostile country. Railroads can be rapidly rebuilt. It takes time for a great herd of ponies to grow.

With sudden looks the Comanches footed it back to the reservation and at the same time accepted unwillingly the election of Quanah Parker from the ranks to the office of principal chief. The nation has remained upon the reservation ever since.



PARKER IN WAR COSTUME.

Chief Parker's power has waxed until now his rule is that of a czar. But he tempers his government with a good deal of shrewdness. From the families of the deposed chiefs he has taken wives one after another until he has seven families living in peace and unity under the roof of the big white house with wide galleries in the beautiful valley of the Whittita.

His first journey among the whites came nearly near to being his last. He and his co-chief, Yellow Bear, one of his seven fathers-in-law, went to Fort Worth, Tex., took a room together, and, like another western dignitary of our own race, blew out the gas. When the door was broken open Yellow Bear was dead, and it took several dollars' worth of brandy and electricity to put Quanah on his feet again. He was worth all it cost and a great deal more, for he has made the Comanches one of the most tractable tribes in the Indian Territory; has secured for them the best land in the Red river valley; has induced them and their allies, the Kiowas, to take land in severalty—100 acres apiece—and sold the rest to the government at rates which give the tribe a permanent fund of \$2,000,000.

Such an Indian naturally excites a deal of curiosity, and on inquiry it transpires that he is only half Comanche. His mother was a white woman, and her story and that of her family are among the saddest of border tragedies. Sixty years ago Elder John Parker, of Coles county, Ill., an experienced pioneer, led a small party to the region that is now Limestone county, Tex., and built a blockhouse which was the beginning of Fort Parker. The rest is the old tale—a sudden attack in what was thought to be a time of peace and safety, the slaughter of all the men and captivity of the women and children, with all the sickening details of murder of infants which Americans have heard of since Hannah Dustin, of Haverhill.

In three years all the captives were recovered by negotiation with other Indians except Cynthia Ann Parker, aged nine when taken, and her little brother John. The latter lived an Indian in all save color for many years, then married a Mexican girl who had been taken captive and went to live with her relatives in Mexico. He returned to Texas on a visit just in time to get into the civil war, served through it as a Confederate soldier and then returned to his ranch beyond the Rio Grande. Twenty-five years had passed since the Fort Parker massacre, when Captain Sol Ross—since Governor Ross—surprised and defeated the Comanches on Pecos river. Their chief, Petanocosa, was killed, and his wife and child were captured. That wife was Cynthia Parker, and that child was a younger sister of Quanah Parker.

For a year or two Cynthia had to be restrained to prevent her escape to her wild friends, but in time she became reconciled to civilization. Ten years later she died, and her daughter is a good Christian white woman in all save the half Indian blood. Her two sons grew up Comanches, and now the strange vicissitudes of Indian life have made Quanah a white man in habits when among the whites, but still a Comanche when at home.

Dangers of Newspaper Work. W. C. Cooper tells us the following story of his journalistic perils. He says: "I had several narrow escapes from violent death while engineering an afternoon paper in Texas. My foreman once got up the side of a prominent citizen mixed up with a description of a new abattoir, and the result was appalling. Friends of the deceased insisted on shooting first and listening to explanations afterward. At another time he got a head intended for a double hanging over a swell wedding. It read as follows: 'Tough turned off. A well-mated pair of brutes met their doom. A large crowd witnessed the rites preceding purgatorial pains.' Well, I hid in the chaparral for a month after that. I thought my time was up, and I tried to get a little consolation from the Bible, but the book opened every time at the passage, 'Lo, the bridegroom cometh!' I didn't wait for him."

THE PERILS OF HEROISM.

How Explorers and Warriors Go Insane and Kill Themselves.

"Don't be afraid, Aunt Stella. He is only in fun. He will not shoot."

These were the last words of pretty and sprightly Lotta Carpenter. As they died upon the air there was a stunning report, a bullet entered her brain, and she fell dead. James H. Bartlett, hero of the De Long expedition to the arctic regions, had been



J. H. BARTLETT.

come a raving maniac and murdered his niece. Next he seriously wounded his wife, and then sent a bullet into his own brain. All this at their home in Hampton place, San Francisco.

This is an old story—this of great heroes, after all their troubles and dangers are apparently over, dying by their own hands or in a petty quarrel. Thus did Clive, the illustrious baron of Plassey, who began life as a merchant's clerk and became the conqueror of India, die by his own hand at the age of forty-nine. Thus many heroes of the late civil war have made way with themselves, and the list of men who fought Indians in the far west, or as vigilantes "turned off" the condemned robbers and murderers, and afterward fell into hopeless melancholy and made away with themselves, is an appalling one. Very few systems are capable of standing such prolonged strain and the subsequent reaction.

Bartlett was a man of the famous Jeannette, and after escaping from the wreck was indefatigable in the search for Lieutenant De Long. He was always fond of taking of his experiences in the arctic seas, and would tell with animation the many thrilling incidents of that wonderful journey—how he stood alone with Kuehn on the ice and saw the Jeannette go down; how he was intrusted with the long dispatch which Nindemann and Norov had prepared for the American minister at St. Petersburg, and how at last he delivered it into the hands of Melville. He was at the finding of all the dead bodies of his comrades except those of De Long, Dr. Ambler and the Chinese cook, Ah Sam. The story of his trip after he separated with Melville at Cass Cartia, northeasterly to Point Barlow, then by the Lena Delta southward to Geomniolocke, where he again fell in with Melville, is a volume in itself of daring and adventure that few men would care to undertake.

Some months ago his friends perceived that his mind was affected and warned him; but he thought it only temporary—due to an attack of the grip. A few days before the tragedy he complained of a horrible pain in his head. Miss Lotta Carpenter, a niece of Mrs. Bartlett and a native of Indiana, had come to live with them, and by her pleasant and sprightly ways had made many friends. He called her into the room where his wife lay on the bed, and with the expression, "Now we may as well all die together," drew a pistol and aimed it at her.

She spoke as quoted above, and the next instant was a corpse. He then shot his wife in the fleshy part of the right shoulder, and the next instant placed the muzzle of the revolver to his right ear and fired a third shot. Death was instantaneous of course. Mrs. Bartlett will recover. There is little to add to this distressing story—only that there was not a couple living in San Francisco whose domestic happiness was more complete than was that of the Bartletts, but many stories of the man's strange behavior at times were afloat, showing that his mind was unbalanced.

Superstitions About Mine Discoveries.

There is a superstition prevalent in the gold fields of the west that the discoverer of a rich find is sure to meet a violent end, and some thirty-five or forty instances in point are readily quoted. Out of the forty or less twelve were shot or stabbed to death in saloons and other boozes, five committed suicide, three were engulfed by landslides, five turned murderers and robbers, and were caught and executed in various ways, one fell into a boiling spring and had the flesh literally stewed from his bones, while the others have disappeared, and no one knows what ever became of them. George H. Fryer, once the millionaire proprietor of the Fryer Hill mine, committed suicide in Denver after spending the last nickel between himself and starvation. The discoverer of the great Standard mine, California, was caught and swallowed up in an avalanche. Colonel Story was killed by Indians.

William Fairweather, of the famous "Alder Gulch mine," died with the "frenzied horrors" after a continuous two years' debauch. "Ferrell of Meadow Lake" died with a terrible disease in a San Francisco hospital. The owner of the great mine the "Homestead," became a highwayman and was shot while robbing a stagecoach. John Homer tried the same route that Fryer went. "Doughnut Bill," "Nine Mile Clarke," "Old Eureka" and many others were killed in saloons. Plummer, known as "Montana," the discoverer of the richest mine in the world and at one time "sheriff of the largest county in the United States," was finally hanged on his own scaffold.

Saw His Own Name Among the Killed.

For many years before he shuffled off this mortal coil Constable David M. Southard, of Ellensburg, N. J., had the gruesome pleasure of reading his name on a tombstone, and this fact may have had something to do with his taking his life. The primary cause for his rash act, however, was domestic trouble, which induced melancholia, and when some friends twisted him about the loss of his luxuriant whiskers, formerly his crowning glory, the hopeless old man went home and swallowed laudanum. Southard was a brave soldier during the late war, and in the battle of Gettysburg he was taken prisoner and sent to Andersonville. During this time he was reported dead, and failing to return directly after the war his name was inscribed on the soldiers' monument that now stands in front of the Camden city hall.

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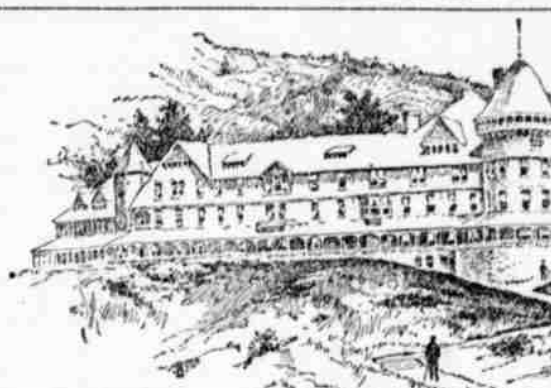
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